(b) whether Government are formulating any specific scheme to modernize the military communication system of the country; and

(c) the likely amount to be allocated by Government for this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) to (c) State-of-the-art communication systems are in place to meet the operational requirements on the borders. Upgradation and modernization of the systems is a continuous process.

Scheme to allow soldiers to keep families with them

†664. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a scheme to allow an army soldier to keep his family with him;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of units where soldiers may be allowed to keep families with them by the Government at present; and

(d) the time by when Government proposes to implement this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) to (d) Married soldiers above 25 years of age are provided married accommodation according to the scales of Authorised Married Establishment (AME). Soldiers at peace/modified field stations are authorized to keep their families with them. Additional accommodation under Married Accommodation Project is also being constructed to increase availability.

Decrease in number of commissioned officers

†665. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that number of commissioned officers in the military is decreasing from the designated capacity;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that number of officers in the military is less than capacity by more than 11,000;

(c) if so, whether Government will formulate any action plan to create awareness among youths regarding recruitment in military; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) to (d) The overall deficiency of officers in the Army is around 24%. The deficiency has been continuing for some time. Presently, there is shortage of 11,153 officers, mainly in the ranks of Lt. Colonel and below.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.